

**DREDGE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 17, 2005
DES PEASE FIELD OFFICE**

The meeting was held on Thursday February 17, 2005 from 1:30 to 3:15 PM, at DES office at 50 International Drive, Pease Tradeport.

Announcement/Introductions: Chairman Diers asked members to introduce themselves. Diers then introduced Chris Williams as the new Coastal Consistency Coordinator and future chairman of the DMTF.

Review of Minutes (Meeting of 11/04/04): Chair said there is one correction and it will be emailed to the TF.

Seabrook Section 227 Project, Habel, Marconi: ACOE (Mark Habel) distributed aerial photos of the project taken February 2, 2005 and said the contractor will be demobilizing by the end of February and the project construction will be complete. There are a couple of issues that will need to be addressed before the contractor leaves, one of which is at the south end of the west wall, at the Chenard property. Erosion occurred and old peat in front of the salt marsh has eroded away. The erosion will be filled in with toe protection in front of that property. COE plans to monitor monthly until the end of the fiscal year in September. The Section 227 Project, Erosion Control Demonstration Program, was not renewed and expires at the end of September 2005. Any monitoring that needs to be done after that will be taken over by the state of NH. The Corps will provide a report on the aerial photos after they have completed their part of the project.

Chair asked if there were any questions. Chair asked members to email their monitoring ideas to him so that he can work on a proposal for a funding source. DES (Frank Richardson) said the project is looking well at this point. DES (Collis Adams) spoke about the pilings being driven and asked what the decision is on the height of the pilings. COE (Habel) will check on it. Adams asked about reflectors being placed on the top. PDA Ports and Harbors (Tracy Shattuck) will check into it.

Maintenance Dredging – Seabrook/Hampton Harbor – Habel, Marconi: ACOE (Habel) said the state of NH has asked the Corps to look at maintenance of the inner harbor anchorages in Hampton Harbor. The Corps did that through the small projects program, Section 107 and they did a reconnaissance report that was favorable to doing a feasibility study, cost shared with the state. They held off doing the study until they saw how the Seabrook 227 project was going to work. They are confident enough to begin the anchorage project and have received the state funds but have not received the federal funds. The fiscal year '06 budget eliminates that program. Chair summarized by saying the COE does not have the capacity to finish the feasibility study by the end of September even if the funding is available. COE (Habel) agreed. Chair said he met with the Congressional staff and was told there will be a clear understanding regarding the federal funding for these projects within the next few weeks. He will report back to the committee.

Erosion issues on Hampton River

DES (Frank Richardson) spoke about erosion issues in the Hampton River in the Sun Valley area. He has given emergency authorization to place breakwater type stone (armor stones) in front of some of the houses that are in danger. He would like to get some of the sand from the dredge project to be placed on the face of the sand dunes. The area where the sand will be placed is a previously designated disposal area so there shouldn't be any problem placing clean sand there. Town of Hampton Public Works Department (Doug Mellin) stated the town has concerns about the erosion that is occurring and the potential damage to the properties. Richardson said there should be some reinforcement to the half tide jetty. The town has received several calls from concerned property owners asking what the town can do to protect their properties. COE (Rich Roach) said the NMFS, USFWS and the EPA are to be made aware of the emergency authorization for the stone placement and the sand reinforcement of the dunes. He asked if Richardson would email them with a copy to him. COE (Habel) said for several years the navigation side of the COE has been asking for the reconstruction of the half tide jetty so that the area behind there will hold a higher slope. DES (Richardson) said the three quarter tide jetty proposal is to build a new jetty landward of the existing half tide jetty and he would like to reopen the discussion of this issue at a future meeting.

COE (Roach) asked if any of the members present have any problems with the emergency authorization for the stone and sand in Hampton. PDA P & H (Shattuck) stated that P & H (Geno Marconi) is concerned that if the sand is put there it won't stay there without some additional work being done. Marconi wants to speak with Frank Richardson before he goes ahead with the order for the emergency placement of stone and sand. COE (Roach) suggested Richardson create a sketch and scan it onto an email message to the aforementioned agencies and include Ports and Harbors' Marconi. DES (Richardson) said he would do so and also forward the photographs he has of the damage that has occurred to date.

Sagamore Creek: Planning, Encroachments – Walsh, Roach, Richardson

Planning

COE (Mike Walsh) said not much is happening with the project currently. The Corps has been waiting on encroachment issues and the eelgrass discussion is ongoing. He said this project was not included in the President's budget submission for '06. Chair said none of the small maintenance projects are in the President's budget so he has spoken to the Congressional delegation and will continue to pursue it.

Encroachments

COE (Roach) spoke about the letter sent to Witches Cove Marina (JP Nadeau) that stated the plan would be modified to shorten some piers and offered him an opportunity to meet with the district engineer or to request a hearing. Roach said Mr. Nadeau has requested a hearing and it is thought that a public hearing is not the correct forum to resolve the issue. DES (Richardson) said he had a discussion with COE (Roach) that included a suggestion that the dredging plan be modified so that the dredging area would be changed to accommodate the marina with a caveat that the outer set of

floats be free of boats except for transient boats. That way the dredging of the channel does not impact the business aspect of the marina. COE (Roach) said they are willing to discuss the issue but stated the federal channel must be kept clear of obstructions. As it is now there is the minor encroachment by Witch Cove Marina and a number of moorings for vessels that are stationed in the navigable channel. He stated several reasons why the Corps needs to stay with the original plan.

Chair asked if Mr. Nadeau wanted to speak. Mr. Nadeau spoke about the letter from the district engineer to him, dated January 7, 2005. Nadeau said there have been numerous communications between he and Mr. Roach and the ACOE. He will send copies of the permits that the ACOE has issued to the marina since 1965 that show permission to place the docks where they are currently located. He thinks it is unreasonable for the COE to require that 18' of dock space be removed from the marina's docks. Chair asked Roach if it would be possible for Witches Cove Marina, NH Wetlands Bureau and Ports and Harbors to meet with the COE district engineer. COE (Roach) said it is possible for the concurrent jurisdictions to meet but went on to say the COE never authorized a marina to be located within the public thoroughfare. Chair asked if Witches Cove (Nadeau) would consider a meeting with the above named agencies, and he responded in the affirmative. COE (Roach) will organize the meeting. Chair asked if the dredge project is possible for the next dredge window. COE (Roach) said it is unlikely.

Discussion followed to include the possibility of adding a mooring anchorage in Sagamore Creek. COE (Habel) said the congressional delegation would need to ask the COE for legislative language to include in a bill to change a specified area of the project from channel to anchorage. That would allow people to continue to moor there and allow the COE to continue to maintain it if funds are made available. Chair said he will make that suggestion to P&H (Marconi).

Chair asked about the eelgrass issue on Sagamore Creek. COE (Walsh) said they will continue to discuss it with NMFS to see what will be acceptable as far as characterization of what exists there. Chair asked if the meeting between COE and NMFS can be accomplished within the next month. COE (Walsh) said he will try to do that.

Cocheco River Dredging – Walsh: COE (Walsh) said 15,000 cubic yards have been removed out of 40,000 cubic yards. The contractor is behind schedule with less than a month left in the current dredge window. Contractor is focused on the Dover Landing work funded by PSNH and the city of Dover. COE expects that part of the work to be done by the end of February. He has asked for an extension but doesn't think the contractor can finish the work even with a month's extension. The best way to proceed would be to consider an extension for next year and not for this year. Discussion followed. Chair read from a letter from NMFS (Mike Johnson). NMFS said unless there is compelling evidence that the extension will reduce impacts or have a neutral effect upon impacted resources, NMFS would not support it and can not concur. DES (Richardson) said there needs to be a site specific analysis on river dredging versus harbor dredging. He thinks the current protocol was developed for embayment and Winter Flounder populations in places like Hampton Harbor. He said DES Wetlands Bureau along with Fish and Game and NMFS, would like to develop site specific data on the upper reaches of the rivers to determine if dredging projects can start earlier in the fall. Springtime extensions would more likely impact fish runs. Fish and Game (Bill Ingham) agrees and suggests the COE, NMFS, FWS, Fish and Game and Wetlands Bureau all meet, soon, to discuss it and come to some consensus. Chair asked COE if they want to withdraw the extension request for this spring. COE (Walsh) said they will take any extension they can get

but if it has to be one or the other, he would prefer it to be next year. It was suggested they meet next week (February 24, 2005, 10:00 AM) to make a decision. Agreed. Discussion followed.

Deep Water Disposal Site, New Site Planning – Diers

Chair said there have been 1.2 million cubic yards of dredge material placed at the Cape Arundel disposal site and it will close in 2010. 500,000 cubic yards have come from NH, mostly from Portsmouth Harbor area and private dredging projects. It takes up to seven years to get new disposal sites designated and permitted. The first step is a scoping study where EPA and ACOE work to identify a location between Portland, ME and Portsmouth, NH. The second step is to determine how much material will be placed at the new site. COE (Mark Habel) said the designated sites never get funded in the budget so the COE is waiting for both states (NH and Maine) to make a formal request of their congressional delegations to pursue the funds. Discussion followed. Chair referred to the letter he drafted and asked members if they want a letter sent. Discussion followed. It was suggested that the Chairman contact Todd Burrowes, Consistency Coordinator for the state of Maine and others in Maine to see if they are willing to formally request funding. If the Maine delegation is being contacted, then chair will send the letter to the NH delegation.

Other Business/Minor Projects:

US Coastguard Basin Dredging, New Castle

COE (Roach) said the basin dredging was permitted it over the objections of the NMFS without mitigation other than eelgrass friendly moorings.

UNH Pier Project, New Castle

COE (Roach) said they are still waiting to hear about the studies regarding eelgrass and essential fish habitat in the area. Fish and Game (Bruce Smith) spoke about the rock cribbing issue and asked what the final determination is on where it is going to be placed. He continued by saying it is his opinion that it would be better to dispose of it on high ground and feels sure that decision would be supported by other resource agencies. Chair said that UNH (Rich Rouleau) made the statement at the last meeting that they would be happy to accommodate that suggestion if it didn't require studies to discuss the impact of where they are going to place the material. Chair said it will be answered at the next meeting. DES (Richardson) said the idea that was discussed at the last meeting to remove the timbers and simply push the piles of rock over seemed to have merit. F&G (Smith) said it would be better than placing it on high ground but F&G still wants to know what the final decision is going to be. DES (Richardson) said there has been no additional information submitted to the permit application file and feels they are coming up with a better plan and will submit something soon.

Phillips-Exeter Academy Docks Dredging

Chair asked City of Dover (Peschel) if the dredge material from the Phillips Academy docks has been placed in the dredge spoils cells in Dover. Peschel said it was placed by the second week of December 2004.

Comprehensive (Upland) Dredge Spoil Disposal Study

Chair spoke with COE (Saji Varghese) about the upland disposal study. The study is $\frac{3}{4}$ completed and may be finished by April 2005 with the report to be submitted this summer.

Piscataqua Deep Draft Channel

COE (Habel) said the Corps is looking at widening the upstream turning basin. It is a NH project but all the drilling and blasting work will be done in what Maine considers to be its waters. It is economically justified because of some grounding incidences that have resulted in multi-million dollar repair bills to ships. COE has not yet scoped the feasibility effort but there is some funding they reprogrammed this year to do that. However the feasibility study, which would be shared 50/50 between Division of Ports and Harbors and COE, was not funded in the 2006 budget. He expects Ports and Harbors to request it from the congressional delegation. If funds are made available the COE will involve the agencies in the scoping and initiating the feasibility study. It will take a couple of years to complete the study.

Chair set the next meeting for April 7, 2005 at 1:30, DES office, 50 International Drive, Pease Tradeport.

Adjourned 3:00.